

POEMS

By

RITA FRANCIS MOSSCOCKLE



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POEMS

By

RITA FRANCIS MOSSCOCKLE

AUTHOR OF "FANTASIAS," "THE GOLDEN QUEST,"
AND OTHER POEMS.



ELKIN MATHEWS,
4 CORK STREET, LONDON, W.
1914

PR
5097
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1714

R. I. P.

To the dear memory of my Mother, and
my Husband.

v

867058

PREFACE

“The Golden Quest,” “Follow Me,” and some other of these little poems were published some years ago by Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench and Co. They are now included with others in this volume.

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And the angel that was sent unto me, whose name was Uriel, gave me an answer and said, “ Thy heart hath gone too far in this world, and thinkest thou to comprehend the way of the Most High ? ”

Then said I, “ Yea, my Lord.”

Then said he unto me, “ Go thy way, weigh me the weight of the fire, or measure me the blast of the wind, or call me again the day that is past.”

2 Esdras, iv.

POEMS

THE GOLDEN QUEST

I

LET me stay awhile to wander through this tangled
maze of life,—
Here in peace, with God to guide me—far
from all the mundane strife.

II

Thus to taste those magic waters from the pure
Pierian spring ;
Till in quest of life's Elixir, Heav'n its golden fruit
shall fling.

III

Or on Mount Parnassus lying, listen to the bells
sublime,
Pealing down its lofty steeple, truths that echo through
all time.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

IV

With the wide world's wild pulsation throbbing
through these mortal years,
Light shall gild the far horizon radiating sorrow's
tears.

V

As the wind blows where it listeth, who can say, lo
here—or there ?
So the mighty spirit rushes, none can track him to his
lair.

VI

Life is short and time is speeding, lightly brushing
down the hours,—
Till the trees stand stark and leafless, crownless and
despoil'd the bow'rs.

VII

Memory stays but pleasures vanish, slowly, surely,
one by one ;
And the progress of the nations darts aloft from sun
to sun.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

VIII

Eyes of Lynceus or Argus, give me that I penetrate
Through the wonderland of knowledge—thus my
soul to elevate.

IX

What is life, a dream? A platform whereon each
must play a part;
Holding self behind an ægis, off to ward the foeman's
dart.

X

Shuffling vainly for the trump card in the fev'rish
game of gain;
Losing all that is most worthy in the ignominious
strain.

XI

Daily nursing carking sorrow nestling in the buds of
joy;
Not a flower without a canker—nought of bliss
without alloy.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XII

Breathless haste, the great crowd hustling one another
down the tide ;

Till some oasis they pant for lying smiling at their
side.

XIII

Some soft pause for thinking—praying—some sweet
lull of laden life ;

In the longing and pursuing, in the struggling and
the strife.

XIV

A handshake here, a smile, a word ; there a frown,
a shrug, a sigh ;

Here the ring of a rippling laugh ; there a moan
and wailing cry.

XV

Life and light for a little while—vapour merely or a
breath ;

Pulsing veins in the morning prime—and, at night,
the hush of death.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XVI

Hard frozen hearts beating around, tunèd to an ice-bound world ;
Would they care if you died of cold or in Lethe forth
were hurled ?

XVII

Stoop and aid you to rise would they, or e'en soil
their dainty hands ?
They would rather bind you the more, manacled with
iron bands.

XVIII

Abjectly ill full many lie on the wide highway of life ;
But Society turns her head—and the misery grows
more rife.

XIX

Ah, kind hearts, true hearts are few ; never till their
light is gone,
Do we perceive the aureole that around their fore-heads shone.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XX

As a flower 'tis true we come : we bud—we blossom—
and we die ;

But the falling seed will spring a plant immortal in
the sky.

XXI

That we shall return I hold it, bearing forth the
sheaves we've sown,—

Wheat and tares in that great Harvest when the Lord
makes up His own.

XXII

Of agnostics, what an army ! crawling on the beaten
sod ;

With their finite knowledge seeking for the hidden
truth of God.

XXIII

Do they deem that nothing liveth that their narrow
minds can't site ?

How can finite understanding think to grasp the
Infinite ?

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XXIV

Storming with their paltry pellets, truth that meets
them undismay'd ;
Futile fight against the Highest, better leave it un-
essay'd.

XXV

Truth is proven by a witness which hies not from east
or west ;
Not here—or there—but a spirit born of God within
the breast.

XXVI

What a swarm of flashing fireflies singe their wings
in rays that are,—
But the flicker of a rushlight which to them shines
forth a star.

XXVII

Shall we then dissect the lily, thinking limb from limb
to tear,—
That the plan of all creation may unveil its secret
there.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XXVIII

On a system which our groping, grovelling minds
can never gauge ;
God unfolds from one the other—as He opens age
from age.

XXIX

On the summit of a mountain, lo I stand and view
below,—
All the people flit as insects, restless, ceaseless to and
fro.

XXX

Castles loom as puny ant-hills ; trains and carriages
as toys,—
In a state of constant motion as propell'd by little
boys.

XXXI

And one thought that presses on me seems to
conjure life to view
From a diff'rent standpoint, lending God's own mirror
clear and true.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XXXII

How infinitesimal are we ! what minutiae in His
Hand

Who took from dust to form of dust, His own Image
on the land.

XXXIII

Out from protoplasm growing peers the blade and
then the ear ;

Slow unfolding—slow expanding—till develop'd
form appear.

XXXIV

From the lesser to the greater, evermore the ages
roll

In perpetual evolution, deep'ning, broad'ning out the
whole.

XXXV

All things perish in the using moulded as we are of
clay ;

Only spirit, actuating all our doings, lives alway.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XXXVI

Mind doth never touch the body, toucheth not at
any point ;
Yet the motive power supplieth, fills with oil the
empty joint.

XXXVII

O ye searchers probing deeply with the cruel knife—
one word ;
“Destroy not in all my mountain, neither hurt ye,”
saith the Lord.

XXXVIII

Say shall Darwin over Paley triumph in his learnèd
code ?
Both may point to us diversely, up to God, the self-
same road.

XXXIX

Reason out a fourth dimension in the wilderness of
space ;
Argue from a syllogism all hypotheses of race.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XL

Is it worth a lifetime's study but to find when life
is o'er,—

We are little more than children digging on a bound-
less shore ?

XLI

What though sceptics rave with wisdom, better be a
child to glow

With the happiness of Heaven than their heresies
to know.

XLII

O faint and feeble little men 'neath those vivid
spheres on high,

"Twere well most humbly to confess, " Lord, how
poor a thing am I."

XLIII

What are we but infants crying on the mother lap of
earth ;

Infants in life, infants in death, infants as we were
at birth ?

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XLIV

Mighty chain connecting all things—motive-power of
good and ill ;
Man is crown'd with God-like glory of the majesty
of Will.

XLV

Descartes maintain'd free-will to be th' image true of
Deity ;
Tree of life whose magic fruit is death and immor-
tality.

XLVI

On the pole the ego reareth doth our fate for ever
turn ;
We, the outcome of the ages, strike the sparks that
deathless burn.

XLVII

If Will were not and we were but puppets dancing
on a board,—
Then no responsibility—punishment—nor yet reward.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XLVIII

Truly are our acts our judges ; and our Nemesis we
call—

From the deepest depths of darkness or from Heav'n
above us all.

XLIX

Whence come cries and shrieks so piercing that the
air with wailing smokes ?—

Crawling—curling round and up—till the fume
sulphuric chokes.

L

With sin and death the city heaves ; paved with tear-
drops are its ways ;

And o'er the shining surface rolls a weary world its
weary days.

LI

The little children cry for food, stones you give them
—and not bread ;

Breaking are their tender hearts, but their misery's
on your head.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LII

Give them air, the stifled children—for we often hear
them sigh ;

Give them space to play as blithely as the happy
birds on high.

LIII

Sad are tears on aged faces ; how far sadder on the
young,—

Little lives that find too cruel earth's rude mantle
round them flung.

LIV

“ Feed My lambs,” the Saviour said ; but to drain
the glass of pleasure,

You disburse all coin you have—and thus perish in
the measure.

LV

In a whirlpool thousands languish, see the waters
suck them up ;

They are smiling as they drink it—the sweet poison
in the cup.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LVI

They are dancing on the summit of the chasm as
they go ;
See, they near it—they turn reeling—and they
disappear below !

LVII

How the sun shines on the surface that secretes the
victim's well ;
While a dirge-like singing mingles with the ocean's
funeral knell.

LVIII

And the air with sighs is laden as the dark waves
splash at night,—
Spirits passing and repassing leave their phantom
trail of light.

LIX

Hark, the sound of rebel voices clamouring for a
gilded goal ;
They a tinsel crown desiring thus would barter e'en
their soul.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LX

Mammon is the god they worship, bowing to the calf
 of gold,—

With the same profane obeisance as the Jews in days
 of old.

LXI

Lucre wears the garb of friendship—poor ass in a
 lion's skin ;

But the ears obtrude too rudely from the shoddy
 mane within.

LXII

Clothe the naked, feed the hungry, shelter those who
 are opprest ;

With your gold let best works flourish, and God's
 love will add the rest.

LXIII

Seek not far for some to succour, they are crying at
 our gate ;

They are dying on our threshold—while we know
 not half their state.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXIV

Sinking souls and starving bodies—reeking misery
and woe ;
God is asking through His children for the love
we all should show.

LXV

Coarsest raiment oft disguises those whom He has
pleased to dress
With the beauty-hue of Heaven—saintly robes of
righteousness.

LXVI

Fill'd with pain untold and rending is the pulsing
world around ;
All its want and anguish reading us a lesson most
profound.

LXVII

That we lose no chance of aiding, smoothing with
our little best,—
Any pillow hard and thorny, any couch of sad unrest.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXVIII

Give us friendship—hearts as sterling, burning with
unflick’ring ray ;
Loyal in all thought and action, true to-morrow as
to-day.

LXIX

With electric current rises kindred soul that answers
mine ;
Eye meets eye and searching deeply peerless treas-
ures I divine.

LXX

Converse sweet on subjects closely lying near the
hearts of each ;
Much to hear and learn and ponder ; much to tell
and much to teach.

LXXI

Love that holds us with its passion in the sunshine
of to-day,—
Will it flourish in the gloaming when life spends her
golden ray ?

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXXII

Will it grasp the trembling fingers, smooth the silver-banded brow ?

Flower of flowers that softly shaketh glitt'ring dews of love-drops now.

LXXIII

Such a gift—the fairest rarest, Heav'n-born bloom of love on earth ;

Making e'en the beggar maiden worthy of Cophetua's birth.

LXXIV

Love, a lion in your strength, a lamb by silken ribbon led ;

An angel of the inner self has your finer senses wed.

LXXV

And the cold heart melting in me ran in rivers through my life ;

Love-lit currents rippling fondly round my queen —my own true wife.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXXVI

Dante's Beatrice, Petrarch's Laura, worshipp'd as
they were—afar,
Were but poets' dream-creations—shadow-forms to
what you are.

LXXVII

Something tangible I hold you—angel and companion
tried ;
Wisest counsellor and helpmeet—truest friend and
dearest guide.

LXXVIII

Man is what a woman makes him, motive power of
the machine
She who stands at helm directing with stout heart
and eye serene.

LXXIX

“ Born to rule but not for battle,” Ruskin deems of
woman's sphere ;
She should let this puissance crown her with a value
doubly dear.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXXX

Are the rights of women truly thrusting home the
wrongs of men ?

Nay 'tis only jealous carping that would shut them
out again.

LXXXI

Shut them out from boundless treasures with which
wisdom's fields are white ;

Shut them in to serve as Phyllis, rock the children
day and night.

LXXXII

Once the slaves of household tyrants in their minis-
tries opprest ;

Deem'd incapable of rising to the level of his quest.

LXXXIII

Now proved worthy of presiding at the councils of
the State ;

In the woman's crown of honour gleams the jewel
of the great.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXXXIV

O my sisters with your dowry—pow'r to use for good
or ill ;

Wear the white rose which shall perfume every walk
of life you fill.

LXXXV

Better far than protestations, grander than fine
precepts giv'n,

Is the silent sweet example of a life that points to
Heav'n.

LXXXVI

In each soul there dwells the hidden, closely hugg'd
—far out of sight ;

None of us unveil that treasure to the cold hard stare
of light.

LXXXVII

Two selves pulsing in one body ; one the spirit of
the earth ;

And the other that pure essence—offshoot of immortal
birth.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

LXXXVIII

Raging fiercely in their prison striving each one to
prevail ;

Sir Galahad no stronger strove to obtain the Holy
Grail.

LXXXIX

Stamp it down O gentle spirit, trample on the seed
of sin ;

Make the spark divine to triumph, may the angel in
us win.

XC

Ah there gnaws a growing craving buried deeply in
the breast ;

’Tis the burden of a burning to express the un-
express’d.

XCI

Flash our words athwart the silence of the brooding
mighty world ;

Wing’d with flame their fiery arrows and their purple
crest unfurl’d.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XCII

Swiftly speeds their bubbling current coursing
through our throbbing veins ;
Shiv'ring many a hope to atoms with the clanking of
their chains.

XCIII

The seed they sow, the tares they sow whither fly
we cannot say ;
But the scatter'd grain we know will swell the harvest
store one day.

XCIV

The busy mart of life is block'd with a seething,
surging sea ;
And the world's great burden is the suff'ring of
humanity.

XCV

One long cry that rises ever swelling volumes in its
tone,—
Pierces through the darkness, falling stunn'd with
light before the Throne.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

XCVI

Ceaseless struggling, striving, stumbling in the race
before us here ;
Maddest stampede ! tramping over human lives in
our career.

XCVII

Who can say in the millennium if Utopian codes will
reign ;
And if truth and right unshackled will shine out star-
lit again !

XCVIII

A perfect hierarchy it seems far in my vision rises ;—
When no hydra-beasts will stalk raving fiends in
saints' disguises.

XCIX

When the truth undimm'd unerring shall uphold
her glass to time ;
Lamb and Lion correlating—stretched before one
hearth sublime.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

C

When happiness will be unmark'd by pale sorrow's
tearful stain ;
And love will drink nepenthe draughts with its own
true love again.

CI

What is happiness we ask—the *summum bonum* all
would seek ;
Dwells it in the stately castle or in cottage of the
meek ?

CII

Is it wrapt in rank or jewels downy couch or dainty
fare ?
You may seek in these to find it—but know well
it is not there.

CIII

Aristotle deems it reigneth over all things, proudly
tow'rs
In exerting all the noblest, all the highest of our
pow'rs.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

CIV

But relegate it how you will—its true essence is
defin'd,—

Laid in the heart that stay'd on God there holds
perfect peace enshrined.

CV

Ah vain hopes and aspirations ! what avails if faith
is fled ?

Crowns and kings and thrones must mingle with
the ashes of the dead.

CVI

All things flow in one strong current which no mortal
can arrest,

To the touchstone of all knowledge—to the sepulchre
of rest.

CVII

Shall we trample down with fury pearls more
precious far than life ;

Hurling paltry preachments—pand'ring to the wild
desire for strife.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

CVIII

Strife, I say ! what strive with angels ? Principalities
and pow'rs
Are but hollow-sounding cymbals, blasted rocks and
tumbling tow'rs.

CIX

Parley with the saints of Heaven—derogate the truths
they taught ;
Interlard transmute at pleasure till God's Word is
sin-inwrought ?

CX

Casting weaklings low in darkness ; laughing at
their blank despair ;
Seeds Saturnine sowing broadcast—till rank poison
fumes the air.

CXI

Darkness, doubt, phantasmal horrors crowd this little
night of time ;
But at morn the shadows fleeing shall break forth
the light sublime.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

CXII

Go not down in deepest dudgeon O most mighty
mother age ;
Weeping o'er the gruesome follies acted on a pinch-
beck stage.

CXIII

Life is fairer, stronger, truer, as the earth-veil slips
away ;
Opening up a golden vision—palaces of endless day :

CXIV

Deeper love and nobler longings all unfelt in sunny
spring
When the careless heart is leaping in a hall where
death-knells ring.

CXV

When the odour of the roses from the garden steep'd
in light,
Flames the thirsty thoughtless spirit with a false
but fond delight.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

CXVI

Pluck the flowers O foolish children and their beauty
is laid low ;
Take the blossom in your fingers and behold the
bloom must go.

CXVII

Kill by slow degrees the carnal—sink the grosser in
the great ;
Till the fleshly faints and falters in the soul's
refinèd state.

CXVIII

Bring me forth a wreath immortal from the golden
fields of light ;
Let me place it on her forehead as she sleeps there
wrapp'd in white.*

CXIX

She shall lie though stilly—queenly, in a pompous
solemn state ;
While for her the cannon booming shall roar out
all honour great.

* The Church the Bride of Christ.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

CXX

Such a smile—a smile of angels I can see upon her
face ;
That no shade of care shall darken and no sorrow
shall efface.

CXXI

On her breast the cross is gleaming, emblem of her
living love ;
Of the battles and confusion—of the strife wherein
she strove.

CXXII

And the white rose softly nestling in the ringlet o'er
her brow,—
Is no purer than her spirit—infinitely perfect now.

CXXIII

Stay a moment—on the shimmer of her faultless
flowing dress,
Drops a stain of ruby colour—life-blood of her
Righteousness.

THE GOLDEN QUEST

CXXIV

It has touch'd her—woke her—flamed her with
unutterable life !

See she rises—bathed in glory, snapping e'en death's
flashing knife.

CXXV

Hath she found it—life's Elixir—in that one oblation
laid—

On the white effulgent Altar to which all poor souls
are bade ?

A BALLAD OF POETS

GREAT soul—great beacon light that flames
The arching firmament of power—
That pales with its superior glow,
The lesser luminaries quite ;
Immortal Shakespeare do I see
You pass in all your kingly state :
While treading closely on your heels,—
Comes Goethe with the princely mien,
The weird sparks playing on his brow ;
Bearing the scroll of his own “ Faust.”
And then—hand clasp’d in hand there pass,—
Milton and Dante clothed with fire
That flashes light from Heaven’s own shrine,—
Until it burns in livid tongues
Upon the hearth-stone of the world.
Then Shelley with his lyre that woke
The silence of the hills—and charm’d

A BALLAD OF POETS

As Orpheus the very brutes,—
Passes in slow procession forth ;
With Tennyson, the laurel-crown'd ;
And Byron, bard of love, whose lays
Vibrate through all youth's golden days.
Heartbroken Keats and bland Tom Moore
Whose simple strains still draw a tear ;
With plowman Burns who fann'd the spark
Ethereal beneath his blouse.
Wordsworth—Longfellow—Whittier ;
Together with a glorious throng
So dazzling—that my eyes I shade
Before th' effulgence of their rays.
Thus higher do they grandly rise
In one long shining company.
Above the grade of common things—
Above the earth—above the stars,
They bear in crucible divine,—
Their splendid incense straight to God.

THE HOLY GARDEN OF SLEEP

THERE'S rest in the tombs of the silent dead,
Where the willow waves her arms o'er their
head ;

And the fairest flowers are strewn to prove—
That death can never annihilate love.

A peace profound—yet so solemn and deep
Reigns over this holy garden of sleep ;
That the tears of the living may not mate
To the sorrows and cares of mortal state.

As the white flow'rs droop on the lowly graves,
And the fresh rain all the green grass blades laves,—
So lying there dust to dust they shall bring
From the buried seeds fair blooms in the spring :

The spring immortal—the spring that will shine
For ever and ever on hills divine ;

THE HOLY GARDEN OF SLEEP

When the poor weak bodies now sleeping here,
Shall rise when the Trumpet of God is near.

Thus rest in the holy garden belov'd,—
Till the stigma of death be all remov'd ;
When the light that breaks on eternal day,
Shall chase the shadows of earth away.

VITÆ BREVIS

WE come, we play our part, we smile, we weep,
we die ;
Then 'neath the sod the mourners leave us
there to lie.

They heap the turf above around the weary head ;
While mournfully they say, “ the soul to God is fled.”

They wear a woe-worn face to match their sombre
dress ;
Till Time the world's wound-healer makes the
sorrow less.

O such is life ! Like children building tow'rs of sand,
The first great death-wave swoops us down from out
the land.

VITÆ BREVIS

Onward flows all life towards the one ideal,—
Which will substitute the seeming for the real.

The child before the man—the bud—and then the
flow'r ;
Mortal, then immortal—death ere life evermore.

NAPOLEON'S CONVICTION *

HE read it—the great world's hero ;
He read of the Perfect Man
Incarnate in the Son of God ;
And as his keen eye ran—
Through all those mystic pages touch'd
With fire from Heav'n's own shrine ;
He closed the book then gravely said,
“ Look you, I, men divine ;
But this same Christ of Whom I read
He is no man—but God.”

* Anecdote related of Napoleon

A HARVEST HYMN

(This Hymn is set to music as a March and Trio
for organ and full chorus, by R. Graham Harvey.
Published by Hart and Co.)

(MARCH)

LORD, with joy our thanks we offer
For the gifts that Thou dost strew ;
Fruits, the golden fields are yielding
Ever year by year anew.

Hear us in Thy love confiding
As we view our garners bless'd ;
Thou who sendest rain that bringest
Ears of corn in beauty dress'd.

(TRIO)

Love, such rich wealth of fullest blessing falling
On earth's fair fields and on the harvest store,—
Rings out the praise o'er all the wide world calling
Of that dear Hand which feeds us evermore.

A HARVEST HYMN

Lord, on that day when the bright sheaves dividing,
Rank tares from out the ripen'd wheat are riv'n ;
O may we be for aye with Thee abiding,
The golden grain within the fields of Heav'n.

(MARCH)

Praise the Saviour—praise His goodness,
Praise His name for evermore ;
For the seed-time and the harvest,
For the sunshine and the shower.

THE LOVE THAT NEVER DIES

(These lines were written for an interpolated song in the Cantata "John Gilpin," Music by R. Graham Harvey. Published by Hart and Co.)

VERY dear in springtime
Is the laughing blue-eyed bride ;
But dearer is she after
As they walk life side by side.
They draw fresh draughts for loving
As they find heart-gems declare
The roses of such gladness,
Are a coronal for care.
It is not love
That with time flies ;
Love is the love
That never dies.

THE LOVE THAT NEVER DIES

Love only grows the greater
In the rolling tide of years ;
Love only lives for ever
That hath fought time's many fears.
And like a rushing river
Flowing onward to the sea,—
Love, stronger, purer, truer,
Glides into eternity.
It is not love
That with time flies,
Love is the love
That never dies.

HOPE ON

HOPE on, whatever be thy lot,
Do not despair.
Heav'n thy path below is lighting,
And God is there.
Sorrows cannot stay to chide us
Nor tears for long ;
Soon the sighs shall break in singing
One long sweet song.
Hope on, for far away on angel-wings
Hope brings glad tidings of immortal things.
Hope on, dear heart ; beyond there lies
All we desire ;
But we must to gain that glory,
Pass through the fire.
First the sowing then the reaping ;
Night ere morn's ray ;
Sorrow only crowns with gladness
The perfect day.
Hope on—for far away on angel-wings,
Hope brings glad tidings of immortal things.

THE BEE AND THE ROSE

“ **I** LOVE you much,” said the bee to the rose ;
 “ I love you much, my dear ;
And I would kiss your downy cheek
 If I might draw more near.
If I might come more near, my dear,
 If I might come more near.”

The rose look’d pleased for she open’d her leaves ;
 The bee flew in with glee ;
He stole the sweets and stung her heart,
 Then away off was he.
“ I cannot linger here, my dear,
 I cannot linger here.”

“ O such is life,” said the rose through her tears ;
 “ We give our sweets away
And barter all at pleasure’s cost,
 Which never can repay.
But we cannot linger here, I fear,
 We cannot linger here.”

LYRA ANGELICA

THERE is a clash of music on the hills
That vibrates softly, and the fresh air fills
With such a melody of many lyres,—
It thrills through all the soul's divine desires ;
Infusing such new life—such ecstasy,
I catch the tones of heaven's own minstrelsy.

The path below is sown with scarlet flow'rs
That twine their tendrils round the vernal bow'rs ;
Behind the blooms the serpent-eyes gleam bright,—
But from above streams down the golden light
That withers them within their sockets,—so,
The way winds upward, and that way I go.

Some tears must fall—some breath must bow the trees,
The sun disperses them ; then on the breeze

LYRA ANGELICA

The night-wind sighs and bursting through the dawn,
Aurora bounds—and lo ! behold 'tis morn.
The gate is open of those mansions fair ;
Yet should I enter—dare I venture there,—

But for the King, my King who standing smiles
Without the portals, and my fear beguiles ?
'Tis He, 'tis He, the wind may come and go ;
'Tis He, come gladness or come woe ;
Be long or short the way—or hard the sod
What matter ? since He is my King—my God.

MY WIFE

O DEEP within those clear calm eyes
A bright flame burns ;
They flash the happy light around
Wher'er she turns :
They hold me in a magic weft,
Till I am drawn
Into the glory of her love,
As night clasps dawn ;
Sinking her darkness silently
To morn's fair face,
Till earth and sky are rosy-lit
With her embrace.
I contemplate her as she stands,
My perfect wife.
God said it was not good to live
Alone this life.

MY WIFE

He gave a woman—man's best self
To fill that sphere,—
Which is the holiest and
Of all most dear.

The first the nearest place of love,
The honoured wife.

Ah ! that she still might hold that name
In that far life—
Where Christ hath said all angels are,
No marriage reigns ;

He knows it not who such pure joys
And bliss attains.

But it may be that she, my wife,
Will be more there
Than here to me. There may be e'en
A place more fair,
A name more dear, a higher state
Of union—more
Above and greater still than wife.

So true she is—so pure, so good,

MY WIFE

In her combine
All those fair qualities which are
Well-nigh sublime.
A wife should ever be as she,—
Head, heart and mind
To him who holds the golden key
Her gems to find.
An angel-ministrant to point
The Heav'nward way
Through earth's night-time of tear-stain'd
hours,
To cloudless day.

A STAR REVERIE

FROM my small window yesternight
I look'd out on the stars ;
The firmament shone clear and bright
Fleck'd by long golden bars.
The sombre shadows leapt
Where the pale Dryads kept
A festival of fays within the ilex-wood,
Till all the leaves were rustling as their mood.

The long paulonia blossoms slept
Beneath the star-gemm'd sphere :
The od'rous breezes softly sang
To my tired spirit here.
“ O light ! O star of life ! ”
I cried—“ and is there rife
A tangible, a tawny tangled web to twine
Around my sighing soul and make it all divine ? ”

A STAR REVERIE

The moon went out in clouds and up
A dreary darkness rush'd—
Shrouding the world ; and all my heart
Cow'd down, crestfallen—crush'd.
Though dense and dull the night,
At morn it shall be light.

Sorrow must die as the dark must die, and ringing
With pealing preludes of praise earth's voice
was singing.

“ Change ” is the universal law,
No time or state stands still ;
The mystery of progression
Life's secret records fill.
We hold the treasures sent
As jewels only lent—
To stud life's pathway here ; and then enthroned
afar
There burns on everlasting hills our peerless
star.

THE CHILDREN SLEPT

(These lines were written on the Forest Gate disaster ; and the episode related of the little boy who went back into the burning building to fetch his friend is said to be true.)

CALMLY, sweetly the children slept ;
Swiftly, surely the red flames crept,—
Writhing, wriggling their demon heads
Closer around those little beds.

The smiling faces wore a light
Of pleasure born that fatal night ;
To some bright scene they then had been,
Perchance to change the dull routine

Of weary days and hours that past
Each one the same as was the last.
Thus hail'd with childhood's own delight
Was that gay fête on that sad night.

THE CHILDREN SLEPT

To bed they went with hearts more gay
Than they had known for many a day ;
And rosy dreams of fairer hours,
Danced blithely 'mongst their new-found flowers.

A piercing shriek ; and then a choir
Of anguish'd cries rose higher, higher—
Till smoke and voices fire and heat
Lash'd through the air in one wild beat !

The tongues of flame devoured their prey
With ghastly relish as they lay—
Unconscious of the danger round,
That made their gentle sleep profound.

Never to wake to see the day
Break through the rift of clouds away ;
Never to know either tears or pain,
Wearisome days or nights again.

Taken 'midst dreams of a sunny world
To the perfect glory above unfurl'd ;

THE CHILDREN SLEPT

Where immortal flow'rs pervade the land
And star the hair of the happy band.

Sav'd from the flames a small boy stood—
But what now drove the mantling blood
Forth from his cheek ? “ Ah ! where is Jack,
My chum, my friend ! I must go back

And fetch him out ”—so swiftly tore
The noble boy through death's dark door ;
For both the children fell a prey
To that conflagration's sway.

Full many heroes lie unknown
Beneath life's coldly carven stone ;
And hearts beat high with nobler aim
Than earthly annals oft proclaim.

Fair sleeping children ! up in Heav'n
The light of God to you is giv'n ;
Of such the kingdom is and blest
Are they who find such perfect rest.

THE WEB OF LIFE

LIFE is a web wherein we weave
The vital threads that stitch our fate ;
For good or ill we intertwine
The warp and woof of our estate.
Each fibre pulsing through the years
Evokes the smile or wrings the tears.

Ah ! could we weave our life of joys,
Of sweets and dainties delicate,
Such dear delights might cloy the tastes
For which the piquant feast was set ;
And we should die of our desires
Consumèd in ten thousand fires.

Nay rather let us weave the good,
The common good of all mankind ;
The right intent the honest heart,
The deeds that only can be kind.
Thus by a magic west to climb
To all most noble and sublime.

A CORONATION ODE, 1901

FROM east to west—from north to south—
Resounds from shore to shore
The bugle note that doth proclaim
With world-re-echoing roar—
The Coronation of the King !
The Coronation of the Queen !
God save them both for evermore.

King-Emperor, Queen-Empress, hear
The shouts that hail your reign ;
So wide, so vast your Empire is,
The sun o'er your Domain
Sets not ; and to your sway is giv'n
The greatest Kingdom under Heaven.
God keep you both o'er us to reign.

The swelling music lauds the day
That shall from henceforth be

A CORONATION ODE, 1901

A golden-outlined letter-day

In the world's history.

The jewels of the Royal crown,

Reflect the glory and renown

Of Britain's peerless Majesty.

England dear Mother-country bids

Her children to rejoice ;

Though scatter'd far in climes remote,

To acclaim with one voice—

The Coronation of the King !

The Coronation of the Queen !

And well she bids us to rejoice.

O ! Royal Son of her who reign'd

Longer than sovereign here ;

Whose goodness won her people's love,

Whose mem'ry all revere.

May you as she defend the right

Amidst the glare of that fierce light

That round the throne beats cold and clear.

A CORONATION ODE, 1901

Blest by a Consort good as fair,
Belov'd on British shore ;
A Queen more lovely could not be,
No heart could dream of more.

God spare you, our sweet Queen, to shine
Radiant with woman's ray divine ;
God save you both for evermore.

Boom out ye guns ! ye cannons roar !
The Nation's shout prolong :
Never a prouder fitter theme
For poem or for song !
The Coronation of the King !
The Coronation of the Queen !
Their reign o'er us may it be long.

All of the Empire's noblest sons
Of oldest lineage—bow
Before the Crown Imperial,
Their deepest homage show.
God save the King ! God save the Queen !

A CORONATION ODE, 1901

Monarchs more lov'd there ne'er have been ;
On them and us all blessings flow.

Give to their peoples lasting good ;
And may they arm'd be
To wield a sword beneficent
O'er British territory.

The Union Jack flies free and fair,
Floating where stout hearts do and dare—
Brave in the mid-air dauntlessly !

Hark ! to the thund'rous roll of drums ;
Opens the massive door ;
The organ shakes the Edifice—
Trembles the sacred floor :
The King and Queen with perfect grace,
In splendid pomp and stately pace,
Are crown'd midst the deafening roar !

Moments so thrilling are as years ;
Breathless we bend and pray

A CORONATION ODE, 1901

That all around this earthly throne
May gather'd be one day ;
The King, the Queen, their subjects all—
Before the King of Kings to fall—
On Heav'n's own Coronation Day !

God save the King !
His power defend ;
Blessings most rich
Unto him send.
God save the Queen,
And may they reign
Long happy years
O'er their Domain.

FOLLOW ME

(“ And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” St. Luke ix, 23.)

(CHRIST)

“ Brother, arise and follow Me,
’Tis I the Lord who call to thee,
From wrath to come and danger flee,
 Come now, come one and all.
Take up thy cross and by My might
Its burden shall be deemed but light ;
For thou must bear it in My sight
 Till I shall bid it fall.

“ Then when this weary journey o’er,
Thy feet shall press the golden floor
Beyond the Jordan’s silent shore,
 That cross will vanish quite.

FOLLOW ME

And on thy brow a crown shall shine
Whose dazzling lustres will combine
To stamp thee altogether Mine,
Most precious in My sight."

(1ST VOICE IN RESPONSE)

" Yea, Lord, I hear Thee calling me,
From wrath to come I trembling flee,
And Thine I would for ever be,
But——"

(CHRIST)

" But what ? "

(VOICE)

" The world it is so wond'rous kind,
My pleasures in it are enshrin'd ;
It loves me, and my roving mind
For God is not yet won.

I am too young to follow Thee
And give up all so dear to me,

FOLLOW ME

A Christian now I cannot be,
I'll follow later on ! ”

(CHRIST)

“ O child so altogether blind,
The world to thee is only kind
Because thou'rt young and fair !
Life's springtime soon will pass away
Swift fading into grim decay
And Time its joys impair.
Too old and worn to serve Me then,
I ask thy best days now e'en when
The flow'r is in its bloom.”

(2ND VOICE)

“ O yes ! dear Lord, I'll follow Thee,
A Christian ever I would be,
And count all earth as dross to me,
But——”

(CHRIST)

“ But what ? ”

FOLLOW ME

(VOICE)

“ I am so rich in golden ore,
Houses and lands a goodly store,
Increasing it still more and more
Takes all my thoughts and time.
If I were poor without this bait
To chain me to my worldly state,
I’d come and e’er it be too late
Accept Thy gift divine.”

(CHRIST)

“ O brother, my heart bleeds to think
Such trifles stay thee on the brink
Of endless bliss or woe.
Thy soul I may require of thee
Before thy goods increas’d shall be ;
With thee they cannot go.
Will they repay thee at that hour
When death shall hold thee in his pow’r,
For all thou wilt have lost ? ”

FOLLOW ME

(3RD VOICE)

“ Dear Lord I hear Thee calling me,
Thy servant should be strong and free,
And I would ever follow Thee,

But——”

(CHRIST)

“ But what ? ”

(VOICE)

“ I am so full of household cares,
And daily toils come unawares ;
They seem so many traps and snares
To banish things divine.
Rarely at rest, I work away,
Fresh cares succeeding day by day ;
These are the hindrances that stay
My heart from being Thine.”

(CHRIST)

“ Oh know that in thy daily life
Whether as sister, daughter, wife,
Thou mayst do work for Me ;

FOLLOW ME

Let all thine actions ever prove
The motive principle of love ;
 No nobler aim could be.
A household cross to thee is giv'n
To bear upon thy path to Heav'n.
 So humbly follow Me."

(4TH VOICE)

" Yes, Lord, I hear Thee calling me,
A better life I long to see—
The world has nearly wearied me,
 But——"

(CHRIST)

" But what ? "

(VOICE)

" Foremost in folly's band alway
I have been gayest of the gay ;
What would my friends in wonder say
 Were I from them to flee ?

FOLLOW ME

Alas my cheeks would burn with shame
To hear them scoffing o'er my name—
Deriding laugh and jeer and blame
My transfer'd love to Thee.”

(CHRIST)

“ Oh brother when thine end draws nigh
And God decrees that thou must die ;
Will friends avail thee, say ?
Can they avert the touch of death
Or stay the ebbing, flutt'ring breath
That soon must cease for aye ?
I truly then alone can be
A friend a comforter to thee,
When God calls thee away.”

(5TH VOICE.)

“ Oh Lord, 'tis true that I would be
A faithful follower of Thee,
From wrath to come I wish to flee,
But——”

FOLLOW ME

(CHRIST)

“ But what ? ”

(VOICE)

“ The dearest one on earth to me
Perchance may never follow Thee ;
Apart from him I could not be,
His love is my true home.
Alas ! that he is wilful, blind ;
But should he ever change his mind,—
And in Thee resting pure joys find,
No longer I will roam.”

(CHRIST)

“ And canst thou desecrate that love
Which I have given thee to move
His dark relentless mind ?
A woman’s influence used aright,
Is stronger than a sword of might
With sheath of flowers entwin’d !

FOLLOW ME

Come first and show him that your heart
Has chosen well that better part,
He then will follow too."

(6TH VOICE)

" With much delight I'd follow Thee,
A faithful servant I would be,
These fleeting joys are nought to me,
But——"

(CHRIST)

" But what ? "

(VOICE)

" Too old and weak and worn am I,
So soon 'twill be that I must die,
I could not follow Thee on high
If cross-borne it must be.
As years by decades add their tenth
They tell me I must sink at length,
Nay, Lord, I have not now the strength
To humbly follow Thee."

FOLLOW ME

(CHRIST)

“ Oh aged one in faith so weak,
Thou dost in Me no sweet balm seek
To gladden thy last day.
Thank God before death comes to thee
That I have call’d thee now to Me
Nor cast this chance away ;
Delays are dang’rous ; all is lost
When wav’ring minds by doubts are toss’d
And will not when they may ;
For others seize with eager eyes
The golden gem-besprinkled prize,
And then they learn too late
How much is lost in what has gone
Which but for doubts they might have won,
So sorrow is their fate !
Both old and young both grave and gay,
I call to follow Me to-day—
None are denied My love.
All those who bear their cross for Me,

FOLLOW ME

Shall one day radiant ever be
With perfect joys in store ;
And each one to My side they win,
Rare jewels for their crowns within
Shall gleam for evermore.
Bright as the glitt'ring stars above,
They'll shine 'mid heav'nly spheres of love
In bliss beyond explore.
Eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard
What God hath lovingly conferr'd
On all who follow Me.”

LOVE IN THE GLADE

LOVE went stalking in the glade
With a lightsome bounding heart ;
Holding in his golden sheath
Many a bright bejewell'd dart.
Looking near and gazing far,
Pluming oft his wings of light,
Now he sees a maiden fair,
Rob'd in virgin garb of white ;
Sad she seems—she has no love
To give life unto her life ;
So he pulls his silken string
And he asks her for his wife.
Love is sadness, love is gladness,
Love sometimes is only madness !

Love went sighing in the shade
In the waning of the day ;

LOVE IN THE GLADE

But one arrow in his hand,—
All the rest were cast away ;
They had pierc'd so many hearts,
Wringing drops of ruddy gore,
That grown weary of his play,
He resolv'd to shoot no more.
Regretful of the plunder
That made havoc of his life,
He fell amongst the flowers
On his own red reeking knife.
Love is sadness, love is gladness,
Love sometimes is only madness .

POET AND PHILOSOPHER

(PHILOSOPHER)

I AM an orbit whose keen eye of light
Can pierce through the dawning and probe
the night.

Sheer shams and dumb shows I shiver and shake
To all the four winds the idols ye make.

The world is an open book in my hand,
In it I read mystic truths of the land.

(POET)

I am the spirit that filleth all space,
For in earth and heav'n my light is God's face.

The spark I kindle from altars of fire,
Sets the world's soul all aflame with desire.

All men are my subjects for all hearts are mine ;
The sceptre I wield i' my hand is divine.

POET AND PHILOSOPHER

(EPILOGUE)

Philosophers treat of the things that are ;
A noble mission as all may see ;
But the poets are God's ambassadors,
They show alone how those things should be.

A DREAM OF APOLLO

ISIT beside the sedgy stream that runs
Rippling and rushing by my weary feet ;
Above, the birds are singing in the trees,
And in the distance sounds the young lamb's bleat.
So drowsy is the air,
The parting light paints fair
Many an Iris line of beauty in the sky,—
Till it and earth both kiss each other silently.

Athwart the grass the shadows come and go,
Playing a fairy gambol in the stream,
As o'er me while the rushes bend and bow,
It seems a veil enwraps me—and I dream ;
For through yon wicket gate
Where Nora used to wait,
(Ah me ! she's singing now beyond the stars of God)
There comes a gliding figure towards me o'er the sod.

A DREAM OF APOLLO

His eyes are flaming stars, and round his brow
A wreath of twisted laurel is entwin'd ;
His face dead-pale reveals the inward fire
Where in his soul immortal thoughts are shrin'd.

A hero dear to fame,
Insooth I know his name,
Apollo come from Arcady ! and in his hand
A lyre—that lyre that chains and charms the list'ning
land.

He spoke not, though I long'd to hear him speak ;
But silently struck sundry chords that rang
Through all my veins and fibres, thrilling me ;
Then in full flute-like, tender tones, he sang :

“ When hearts are weary and love is sad,
Fond hope from our soul seems flying ;
The flow'rs with a weight of tears are bent,
And Nature's sweet self seems dying.

Alas ! Alas ! and well-a-day !
When hearts are weary and love is sad.

A DREAM OF APOLLO

“ When joy peeps out from a dove-grey cloud,
 Like the sun which e'er is shining ;
Though dusky hued is the cloud awhile
 It still has a silver lining.

 Alas ! alas ! and well-a-day !
When joy peeps out from a dove-grey cloud.

“ Love is the essence and life of life
 To the heart that's worn and weary ;
And sweet content is a lamp that turns
 Into day the night so dreary.

 Alas ! alas ! and well-a-day !
Love is the essence and life of life.”

The lyre is hush'd—through all the trees the wind
 Is echoing the burden of the song ;
I gaze and gaze, but lo ! he is not there,
 He stands not in the leafy shrubs among.

 The night is drawing near,
 The stars are shining clear,
And as the dew-kist eyelids of the twilight close,
 A pent-up truant tear fell silently. I rose.

TRIFLES MAKE THE SUM OF LIFE

(By permission of the Editor of *The Girls' Own Paper*.)

OH is there not a sweetness in the smallest flow'r
that grows,
The dewdrop on the green leaf, the zephyr wind
that blows ;
The broad fields and the wild flow'rs that bestrew
the path we tread,
The odours of the roses and the songsters overhead ?

And our God has not forgotten the smallest things
that please,
The brooklet's faintest murmurs or the music on the
breeze ;
Though power and majesty are His beyond this
world's compare
The tiny flow'rs are sweetest and the children are
His care.

TRIFLES MAKE THE SUM OF LIFE

The daily round of duty, the daily task of love
Howe'er trifling, savours of the angels' work above.
The gentle smile in passing, the kind word on the
way—
Germs oft in richest blossom to bloom in cloudless
day.

The love that speaks in silent acts, the true devoted
heart
Can never give enough of joy, enough of good impart ;
But love is not a trifle—nor should we deem it so,
It is our hope, our joy, our trust, our bane, our weal,
or woe.

Yes, little kindly actions far more than words do tell
What clear and plainest language could never say so
well.
Such little loving actions done by tender, gentle hands,
Will leave their marks indelible on life's own golden
sands.

TRIFLES MAKE THE SUM OF LIFE

Oh, life's made up of trifles as of drops the ocean blue,
They waft us to Eternity—that path all must pursue.
Then let us ne'er waste a minute of those that God
has giv'n.

Since each one passing nears us to the pearly gates
of heav'n.

KING CYRUS' CAPTIVES

BEFORE the presence of august King Cyrus,
In all the glory of his regal sway;
A heathen Prince, wife, children, household,
captives,—

Came, 'neath their galling yoke of fears, that day.

A voiceless misery of mute pain, dumb woe,
That prince's eyes reveal'd still more his gait;
Bent by the blasting blow of bondage, surely
Grim death were sweeter than this sterner state.

The King spake gently—with a pitying eye
On one so young, so noble and so sad—
“ Say, what wilt thou give thy children to redeem ? ”
He answer'd, “ All, all in the world he had.”

“ But giving all for them what yet remainest,
What ransom canst thou offer for thy wife ? ”

KING CYRUS' CAPTIVES

The captive spoke in clear unfaltering tones,
“ For her I'll forfeit sire, my very life.”

“ Freedom to you and yours,” rejoin'd King Cyrus.
“ Begone—I spare your dear ones and your life.”

They left that mighty presence—and the air was
With his praises and their thankful cries all rife.

So home they journey'd descanting as they went
On Persia's monarch and his noble heart ;

But one tongue was silent though the thoughts ran
deep ;

One only in his praises bore no part.

What seem'd ungracious the Prince's ire aroused,
Who straightway ask'd his wife why this should be ?

“ I can but think of one,” in tears she answer'd,
Of one who would his life have giv'n for me.”

If like this captive's wife, our hearts and hopes
Were centred in that Love which died to free
Us from a direr bondage than earth's fetters,
Our lives by such sweet thoughts would nobler be.

MATTIE IN THE CLOISTERS

WEARILY a little figure
Barely clad, and thin and ill,—
Sought the shelter of the cloisters,—
Where beneath the arches still
Found he solace from the sorrow
Of an outside world of care,
That made life in years so tender,
Sad and clouded, sear'd and bare.

Grandly through the vaulted arches
Stole the organ's richest tones,—
Swelling into soulful volumes,
Dying into murmur'ring moans ;
Striking sore poor Mattie's heartstrings,
While the big tears dimm'd his eyes ;
Till the sobs that struggling shook him
Brought an angel from the skies.

MATTIE IN THE CLOISTERS

Slowly down the aisle appearing
Came she robed in sheen of white ;
And her face was fair and beaming
With a sweet unearthly light.

Mattie wonder'd at the vision,
Like a child no fear arose,
And he seem'd as though admiring
The strange beauty of her clothes.

Very tenderly she kiss'd him ;
Then she bore him far away
Past the scenes where he in gladness
Oft did with his comrades play.
Over hedge and tree and flower,
To the golden cloudless land,—
Where the children meet together,
Play upon its shining strand.

Back the gates of pearl and jacinth !
And the lady enter'd in ;

MATTIE IN THE CLOISTERS

Close behind her Little Mattie
Left the underworld of sin.
With the robe of Christ his Saviour,
Far from want and scorn and pain,
Never will he seek for shelter
In an earthly court again.

CHRIST OR DIANA

(Suggested by Mr. E. Long's picture, exhibited at the Royal Academy.)

BLUSHES a rosy hue aslant the sky,
Aurora smiles ; the solemn hour draws nigh
That shall decide the freedom of a life
Chain'd down and bound beneath a nation's knife ;
Debas'd and fetter'd to caprice of will,
Oh who but for a gain untold could bear it still ?
Lo, where it listeth doth the Boreas blow,
But where it resteth can we never know.
Alike the ray which probes the wounds of night,
Transpierc'd a hopeless blindness into sight ;
And o'er the desert of a maiden's heart
Diffus'd such radiance that new life did start,
Now breaking forth on eagle wings to soar
Where Faith and Sight unite for evermore.

CHRIST OR DIANA

The moment come—the multitude around,
Beneath the tow'ring buildings closely wound ;
Rang'd high in tiers, in dappled hues gaze on
To see which triumph may the day have won.
“ Christ or Diana ” rings along the sea ;
“ Let her but cast one grain and she is free.”
Clad in her vestal robe of white she stands ;
’Tis hers by one small act to burst her bands—
Freedom or bondage choose, yea, heav’n or hell ;
The tremor of that moment who can tell ?
Reigns now a strange dead silence—all await
To see a slave dissolve this grain of fate.
Blanch’d with a pallor that reveals the pain,
Her features set, the eyes uprais’d again,
Her soul speaks through them to the eager throng,
Of high resolving, noble, pure and strong ;
Of unseen presence felt whose aid is near
At this all-trying moment to o’ercome each fear.
“ Avaunt, Diana ! bondage do I brave ! ”
Is the averting movement of the slave.

CHRIST OR DIANA

“ Shall one dire grain possess pow'r to recall
The sentence that a lifetime doth enthrall ?
Or buy my soul from Him Who died to prove
The deep reality of His great love.
Nay, rather bondage with its hundred years,
Than reeking misery of shame and tears.
Christ ever ! though a while in bonds to be,
A Christian's crown shall set the slave-girl free.”

THE CHILD'S LETTER

OH Cissy is so ill, mamma,
She looks so thin and wan,
The light has left her dancing eyes,
The rosy hue is gone ;
She lies serenely still in bed,
Nor stirs her head to see
Her Robin gazing for the smile
He loves so tenderly.

“ Say, will she die, my dear mamma ?
I think my heart would break
If nevermore with me again
Her woodland walks she'll take.
The doctor, can't he make her well ?
He cured our little Jane ;
So write to him at once to come
And see her yet again.”

THE CHILD'S LETTER

The mother wrote, then gently turn'd
 Her weary, woe-worn eyes
With uprais'd finger solemnly
 Towards the clear blue skies.
“ 'Tis only One Who reigns above,
 Can make her well and strong ;
Ask God to spare her precious life—
 To Him all lives belong.”

The child look'd grave, and ran away
 On some idea intent ;
The one thought uppermost that nigh
 His heaving bosom rent.
“ If mamma can write to doctor,
 To God then I can write ;
Oh where is pen and paper ?
 I'll write this very night.”

“ Dear God,” he wrote, “ please will you make
 My little sister well ? ”

THE CHILD'S LETTER

Then he clos'd it and address'd it,
But how—I cannot tell ;
Nor did he e'en forget to put
A stamp where it should be ;
While to the pillar-box he flew
And posted it with glee.

“ Oh when will God write back ? ” he mus'd,
So proudly pleas'd he seem'd,
For full of faith and confidence,
His starry dark eyes gleam'd.
And to mamma all smiles he went
To tell what he had done ;
Then she bent tenderly and kiss'd
Her little angel-son.

“ God won't write back dear child,” she said,—
“ If 'tis His will to give
What you desire, oh then be sure
Our Cissy she will live.

THE CHILD'S LETTER

His will be done ! So come with me,
Maybe her sleep is o'er.”
And softly did they enter through
The thickly muffled door.

Slowly the clos'd eyes open'd now
With calm inquiring gaze
To the dear faces bending low
Their lambent love-lit rays.
The fever had abated, so
The crisis thus was o'er :
“ God *has* receiv'd my letter then,”
Said Robin, nothing more.

LOVELY IN DEATH

THOU fair young form of maidenhood
 Making e'en death a lovely sight ;
 Just in the flush of life's sweet bloom,
 How soon thy day is turn'd to night.

The absence of the vital spark
 Disrobes thy features of no charm ;
 Rather the impress it has left
 Has serv'd to paint them bright and warm.

Thy hair wears still its glossy hue,
 Twining and twisting o'er thy brow
 As if 'twould scoff the hand of death,
 And mock its presence even now.

Lovely those eyes, so large, so deep,
 Breathing a love in sooth divine ;
 Bright with the ray thy spirit left,
 In Heav'n's own halo do they shine.

LOVELY IN DEATH

Those veiling lashes curl'd and dark,—
Contrast well with thy marble cheek ;
The chisell'd nose—the clear-cut lips—
Make all description faint and weak.

Thy dress so white, the rose that lies
Upon thy stirless silent breast,
Are emblems of the hidden life
Thy soul has found in endless rest.

Thou casket of a deathless gem,
Now in the grave at peace shall lie,—
Till the last trump of God shall sound
To bid thee join thy soul on high !

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO

(This song is set to music by C. W. Thomas, Esq.,
and published by Hart and Co.)

BY the riverside they wander'd
In the days of long ago ;
When their youthful hearts were throbbing
With a passion-piercing glow ;
When the star-strown smiling future
Lit the fervour of their love
Into a spark as radiant
As undying flames above.
“ For ever mine ”—“ for ever thine ”—
Ah ! well their troth they spoke,
While the pale sun gleam'd above them
And the silver wavelets broke.
’Twas but a living dream,
Now at length they know ;

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO

For nevermore returning
Are the days of long ago !

'Neath an aspen's quiv'ring branches,
By a green and mossy mound,
Shrouded in a veil of sorrow,—
So an aged man is found.

Hoary, bent, convuls'd with sorrow
For the love of long ago,
Does his soul discharge its anguish
As but truest love can flow.

By the riverside no longer
Will they wander as of yore,
For the golden light of morning
O'er their hearts can break no more.

'Twas but a living dream,
Now at length they know ;
For nevermore returning
Are the days of long ago !

GONE BEFORE

O H give me back the golden years
Of the time when long ago—
Sweet sun-kist smiles did woo the hours,
And a tear I ne'er did know.

When flow'r-hung joys bestrewn with gems,
Drops ambrosial shed around ;
And the lov'd and lost so near me,
Loving arms around me wound.

They too have pass'd to join the throng
Round the mystic great white throne ;
While their vacant places leave me,
Ah, so weary, sad and lone.

Only echoes of their voices
Steal along the evening air—
As I dream I see them sitting
By my side as once they were.

GONE BEFORE

Angels whisp'ring in the silence
 Of the hush'd and starry night,
Waft the deathless germs to usward
 From their fire-tipp'd wings of light.
And they sprout as trees, life-giving—
 Fruit that ne'er can wither more,—
Ready ripened to be garner'd
 In the vast eternal store.

CHANGELESS STILL

(This song is set to music by C. W. Thomas, Esq.,
and published by Hart and Co.)

IN the dawning when the sunlight
Stream'd upon the sleepy flow'rs ;
And the wind was shaking gently
Show'rs of dew from off the bow'rs,—
Came a maiden tripping softly
With the love-light in her eyes,—
To the trysting-tree where waiting,
Her beloved she espies.
“ Can you love me thus and leave me ? ”
Cried she in that parting hour ;—
And his word, “ For ever changeless,”
Held her in its soothing pow'r.

In the dawning after years,
Years of waiting and regret,—

CHANGELESS STILL

Came the maiden stepping sadly,
While her eyes with tears are wet.
'Neath the trysting-tree, she gazes,—
Stands an angel waiting there !
Can it be her heart's belovèd,
Come from realms divinely fair ?
“ Changeless still,” he murmured softly,
“ Death is not so strong as love,
And I've come to fetch you, darling,
To a better world above.”

ART

WHAT within the soul illumined
Lieth deep—remote from sight ;
Unsuspected till it flameth
With a long enduring light ?
Giving of its best and rarest,
Giving of itself—the fairest ;
But Art wing'd with silent might.

What is Art but the expression
Of a spark within divine ;
Struggling ever to the surface
Over all it moves to shine ?
Giving of its best and rarest,
Giving of itself—the fairest ;
Making radiance with one line.

What the finest thought of genius
From an intellectual mine,

ART

Wrapt in unrevealed glory,
If no Art can it define ?
Giving of its best and rarest ;
Giving of itself—the fairest ;
Poet, Painter, what is thine.

Art embraces all of beauty
With o'erwhelming force entire ;
Ev'ry particle consuming
In its own supreme desire.
Giving of its best and rarest ;
Giving of itself—the fairest ;
To perpetuate its fire.

WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE

WE stood beside the lowly stone
In Grasmere churchyard—still and
lone—
Which marks the spot where he now sleeps
Beneath the Yew that o'er it weeps.
A poet's grave ! a throne may be
Has not a greater dignity.
Wordsworth, thy name alone can bring
A thousand mem'ries of the spring,—
To those who feel the thrilling touch
Of hands that sweep their heartstrings much.
Childhood returns beneath thy spell,
And all the scenes we lov'd so well ;
While Heav'n that lay so near us then,
Appears to hallow us again.

WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE

Amongst the hills thou lovest well,
 No note rings out a passing knell ;
Yet lightly tread—for one lies here
 Who watches from a fairer sphere ;
Whose gems of thought will ever shine
 With light less human than divine.

TILL THE DAY BREAK

TILL He comes—when morning breaketh and
the shadows disappear ;
And the silver streak of daylight o'er the distant
hills gleams near.
Then fairer than the fairest and lovelier that the
dawn,—
Shall shine the King in beauty who for us a child
was born.
What rapture in that meeting ; what ineffable delight
To eyes that straining sought Him in the darkness of
the night :
When the steaming foaming breakers roll'd o'er the
rocks of life,—
And no beacon lit the blackness of the elemental
strife.
Ah ! then the tears of many shall be sucked into the
deep ;

TILL THE DAY BREAK

No more the knees shall falter and no more dear eyes
shall weep :

Each tear shall flash a diamond in the crown of perfect
love,

When He makes up His jewels for the treasury above.

The light that never yet has shone either on sea or
shore,—

Shall fill the fiery firmament and star the shining
floor :

For fairer than the fairest and lovelier than the dawn,
Shall rise the King in beauty on that undying morn.

REQUIEM.

TO MY HUSBAND

TOLL, bell, toll, for repose of his soul ;
Toll, for his labours are done :
Ring bell, ring, for union in Heav'n ;
Ring—for the kingdom is won.

Toll, bell, toll, for he liv'd to be kind
In thought, in deed, and in word ;
Ring bell, ring, that he finds the rest
Which to the Just is assur'd.

A CHRISTMAS GREETING

MAY the angels who sang on that starry night
so many long years ago ;
Shed showers of blessings this happy time
from their fire-tipp'd wings of snow,—
On you and on those whom you hold most dear,
that God's peace and joy ring
Like some sweet strain in the seraph-choir of the Baby
Christmas-King.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

(On seeing Dante Gabriel Rosetti's picture.)

SHE leant from Heav'n with angel-grace—
 To see her love below ;
O God, she cried, in this fair place,
 Must there still cling the woe
Of loving when the breaking heart
 From its diviner self must part ?

If prayer can save, I pray Thee hear,
 And give him back to me :
Thy holy Angels intercede—
 Whate'er they ask shall be.
The incense of their prayers arise,
 To draw the light back to my eyes.

A SUMMER DAY

“ **L**OVE me little, love me long,”
Was the burden of his song ;
And she smil’d in sweet accord
With the ardour of his word.

Lovers of a summer day,
Will your loving love alway ?

Happy bird upon the trees,
Singing to the flow’r-blown breeze,—
Call’d them with a dulcet note
From its little warbling throat—
Lovers of a summer day,
Will your loving love alway ?

Blushing rose upon the stem,
Cast a tender look at them ;
Shook her petals with a sigh
To the soft wind passing by—

A SUMMER DAY

Lovers of a summer day,
Will your loving love alway ?

Plighted heart and hand for aye,
Who shall rise to say them nay ?
So we leave them as they stand,
Heav'n can be no fairer land.

Lovers of a summer day,—
Love for ever—love alway.

A POET

WOULD you know a poet
Worship him—a star
In Heav'n's bright firmament,
Lowly as you are ?

Then look up above you,
In that higher sphere
Where he sings so sweetly,
Angels pause to hear.

If you will but listen
You may catch a note
Of divinest meaning,
As it down doth float :—
But you cannot reach him,
He—a poet-star—
For he dwells where only
Such pure spirits are.

IN MEMORIAM

(To the memory of my beloved Mother.)

HERE all free from pain and sorrow
She lies at rest—
Waiting for the sweet to-morrow
On Jesu's breast.
Pure was her life and fair and true ;
She knew not guile ;
The gentlest nature was reveal'd
In her rare smile.
The muses knew her well and woke
Her golden voice—
That captive held all listeners,
And made rejoice.
Her beauteous form and face retained
Till she arose—
And joined the blessed choir through which
Her own song flows.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

(By permission of the Editor of *The Girls' Own Paper*.)

RING out sweet bells with all your merry
pealing
The joyous news that thrills our hearts
to-day—

Of the young Babe whose birth a star revealing,
 Stood over where the Christmas-King did lay.
Angels sing on the same grand song as then :
 “ Glory to God—and peace, goodwill to men.”

All tears that fall all sorrows now prevailing,
 The tide drink up that rolls back mountains high ;
No more be heard the cry of one bewailing,
 When Jesus came to-day all eyes to dry.
Angels sing on the same grand song as then :
 “ Glory to God—and peace, goodwill to men.”

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Hand claspt in hand and hearts once more uniting,
Meet round the board where He the Lord shall
 bless
All those who in His birth are here delighting,
 Partakers each of His own righteousness.
Angels sing on the same grand song as then :
 “ Glory to God—and peace, goodwill to men.”

O love of loves ! all human thought transcending ;
 Grant us the joy the shepherds felt when near
They viewed the host of heavenly choirs descending
 To pour their tale of gladness in their ear.
Angels sing on the same grand song as then :
 “ Glory to God—and peace, goodwill to men.”

THE SERVICE OF THE KING

(By permission of the Editor of *The Girls' Own Paper*.)

ARE you working for the Master in the sun-shine and the shade,
Not alone where flowers are blooming but
where tears have swept the glade ?
Where there is no joyous echo of the little children's
cry—

For they cannot sing with gladness when they lay
them down to die.

Merry little lambs are playing in the meadows all the
day ;

But the children of the city bow their heads and fade
away.

You will find them in their sorrow—drooping,
weeping all alone ;

Little pinched and pallid faces with no language
but a groan.

THE SERVICE OF THE KING

Are you working in the vineyard, sowing, pruning as
you're bid ?

Although the world may never know it, from God
no thing is hid.

And be sure your work is incense most acceptable
above,

If apart from all self-seeking, you perform it out of
love.

A kind word in its season is as balm to an aching heart;
And in little ways undreamt of you may play an angel's
part.

'Tis the grains that make the desert, and the drops
the ocean wide ;

While each step you take is golden if the King is
at your side.

You may never see the blossoms of your loving service
given

Here on earth ; but rest assured you will see them
up in Heaven.

THE SERVICE OF THE KING

The precious seeds you sow in tears, shall upspring
in stars of light,
To crown you with their radiance in our God's most
holy sight.

A PORTRAIT

HOLD up the mirror that I may see
If the gods have been kind ;
A face moulded for witchery,
And air proud and refin'd.

Blue eyes, the windows through which there
gleams
A light that burns deep down—
Kindled from an ethereal fire
Which is God's—not my own.

TO ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON
POET LAUREATE. IN MEMORIAM.

A METEOR in the firmament,
Has flashed across the stars—
Paling their light ; it shot afar
And burst Heaven's golden bars.

Then from those fair seraphic choirs
Soft anthems floating rise ;
In one undying song they sing
The peace of Paradise.

And one sweet voice of fuller tone
Rings through those arches tall,—
A voice the world can ne'er forget—
The sweetest voice of all.

What though the lyre he wakes no more,
Lies all unstrung to-day ;

TO ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Immortal echoes from those strings
Can never pass away.

No “moaning of the bar” disturbed
The mighty spirit’s flight ;
“From out our bourne of time and place,”
He sings in undimm’d light.

BORDERLAND

[These lines are written on a touching anecdote in the late Lord Tennyson's life.]

I 'SE not good for much, that's sartin ;
I know my end's drawing nigh ;
But it's 'ard on yer luck I think,
To pull up and say goodbye.
The world ain't bin vary pleasant,
I've 'ad to work pretty 'ard ;
And ofttimes press'd for a penny,
To find but a bit o' lard.

Still, though the times were agin me,
I strode along some'at brave ;
For when yer down o' yer pocket,
The folks oft think yer a knave.
An' it's ard'ous to convince 'em

BORDERLAND

That a man can honest be,
When 'e's nothin' to show for it
But a darn'd patch o' 'is knee.

Eh well, an' am I adreamin',
What does it all come to now ?
Or what more in a 'undred years—
For to death we all must bow.
I'd like to see my ole 'oman,
Jist once 'ere 'afore I die ;
But its vary 'ard I'm thinkin',
Vary 'ard to say goodbye.

So Anne, it's yerself then, is it ?—
'Ow chang'd sin' yer were a gurl ;
When yer eyes were bright as dewdrops,
An' yer 'air one twisty curl.
Then yer was belle o' the village,
An' look'd low when yer took me ;

BORDERLAND

But Anne, so long as yer lov'd me,
Lord ! it was nothin' to we.

We only 'ad each other, Anne,
An' I toil'd for yer right weal ;
An' we us'd to be contented,—
Though we 'adn't a great deal.
But bless me if love don't make us
A satisfied with our lot,
Then my peace is now all blusted,
An' my life 'as bin all rot.

It seems I'm getting 'azy, Anne,
Jist gi' me yer 'and, ole wife ;
I know I'm starting out ternight,
An' leaving the old 'ard life.
I 'ear that singin' in my ears,
Like the ole church-bells at 'ome ;
An' when inside that blessed place,
I shall look for yer to come.

BORDERLAND

But stop, I wants to tell yer, Anne,
When I'm right away up there ;
Don't yer carry on—ole 'oman—
But jist lift yer 'eart in prayer.
What's that them bells keeps aringin' ?
Eh ? only strikin' the noon :
It ain't so 'ard to say goodbye—
If yer come soon, Anne—Come soon.

CHRISTINA ROSETTI

REVERENTLY and lovingly I turn the
leaves
Whereon her heart is writ ;
Sweet saint, now sleeping 'neath the snow,
Whose soul is white as it.

THE VOICE OF SPRING

A VOICE more sweet than all earth's many voices,
Rings out o'er woodland dales and hills away—
Thrilling the pregnant soil and waking sleepers,—
With the fair herald of Spring's newborn day.

Pale with the crystal mantle of the winter ;
Now glows a rosy hue o'er land and sea ;
And sleeping nature waits in expectation—
Of the unfolding beauties that shall be.

A shiver white trembles the prone creation ;
Then gaily gladly steps she forth to meet
The warm embraces of the Sun-god's radiance—
And with them close her mingling pulses beat.

THE VOICE OF SPRING

The flowers peep out from some forgotten cranny ;
The tender leaves of faintest green appear :
And merry birds sing carols to the daisies—
To serenade the fairest time of year.

O ! voice of Spring—O ! promise of the future—
So shalt thou wake us in sleep's garden laid,
On that undying morn of resurrection,
Of which this earthly spring is but the shade.

Sing happy hearts which love hath made united ;
Joy casts her flow'rs before your feet to-day ;
And all creation fills the spheres with music—
In pæans to the promise of the May.

BEATITUDE

THIS poor and crumbling temple of the flesh,
Enshrines the Holy Ghost ;
The spark that struggling with its destiny
O'ercomes this earthly host—
And breaking through the bonds of time and space,
Rides on its psychic wing,—
Through countless æons of progressive states,
To God—the everything.

LETTER FROM THE LATE RIGHT HONBLE. WILLIAM E.
GLADSTONE, PRIME MINISTER, ON RECEIVING A
PRESENTATION COPY OF MRS. MOSSCOCKLE'S BOOK,
“THE GOLDEN QUEST.”

DEAR MADAM,—

I thank you for the gift of your Poems, and with however little confidence in my own judgment, I recognise in them the possession of a thoroughly genuine gift.

Believe me,

Your very faithful

W. E. GLADSTONE.

PRESS NOTICES

“ FANTASIAS ”

This small volume of poems shows a cultivated and comprehensive taste, as the subjects of the verses include religion, classic mythology, and domestic incident. The poem placed first in the book is entitled “Follow Me,” and includes a few dramatic representations of the response made by different ages and conditions in human life.—*The Queen.*

I have, by the way, come across a charming little book, “Fantasias,” by Mrs. Mosscockle, published very neatly by Kegan Paul, Trench and Co. and full of gems which the mind may lay up and garner, and the soul be all the better of knowing, and the lips of repeating, and the heart of treasuring. It is a sweet and pure book—one such as is seldom met with in this age of lurid colouring, and sultry sentiment, and dangerous, insidious teaching: a book such as we should like our children to possess, and feel a safety and pleasure in the knowledge that they are occupied in studying. In my busy life, I have rarely time to read; an occupied journalist is supposed to write *always*—without time to think, or read, or eat, or sleep, or even to pray—and he does it—is obliged to do it—and it is only when he occasionally takes up and tastes such sweet waters as these of which I am

writing, that he knows and realises the unhealthiness of the Marah in which his tired faculties are so often steeped. To our readers, one and all, I say, get the book, and turn down a leaf at "The Little Streetsweeper," "Aqua Vitæ," "The Child's Letter," "Trifles make the Sum of Life," and "Mattie in the Cloisters." They are all good, and all beautiful.—*Lady's Pictorial.*

In the small volume of poems christened "Fantasias," from the pen of Mrs. Mosscockle, the opening verses, "Follow Me," are the best. A good deal of deep, religious and tender sentiment finds expression, and occasionally not without the ring of genuine poetic feeling.—*The Daily Telegraph.*

Some of the tender and pathetic verses contained in the little volume entitled "Fantasias," are already familiar in the guise of favourite songs, and it would be easy to point out in it many others admirably adapted to be "wedded to sweet music," and secure similar success to that attained by "The Days of Long Ago," and "Changeless Still." That the author is capable of more sustained effort and dramatic construction than can be manifested in these short productions is proved by the first poem of this book, "Follow Me," though a less ambitious choice of subject would probably have given a more satisfactory result.—*Morning Post.*

The title is a very apt one, for the poems are full of strange fancies, many of them beautifully expressed. An age which is strongly marked by a love of

materialism, with a strong spice of cynicism, is not likely to be favourable to poetry ; but the writer is a true poet. Many of the poems are marked by the highest Christian spirit.—*Western Morning News.*

The beautiful little poems contained in this small volume, are well worthy of notice. Each one has its own peculiar charm for a poetic mind, but a peculiar pathos is attached to one called “ The Child’s Letter.”—*Court Journal.*

“ THE GOLDEN QUEST ”

“ The Golden Quest ” and other poems by Mrs. Mosscockle. The chief poem, which forms half the book, has a good deal of dash in some parts—there are some nice passages in several of the minor poems.—*The Queen.*

Another lady’s work, by the way, has found favour with Mr. Gladstone. This is Mrs. Mosscockle, of whose new book, “ The Golden Quest,” Mr. Gladstone has written that “ he recognises in it the possession of a thoroughly genuine gift.”—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Mrs. Mosscockle, who has already excited some attention by her little budget of poems styled “ *Fantasias*,” writes with much sincerity and a strong undercurrent of religious enthusiasm. Of the present series, the first poem, by far the longest and most ambitious, is, on the whole, the most successful. “ *The Bee and the Rose* ” is the prettiest of the smaller

poems, and the one succeeding it, commemorating the Forest Gate disaster, will attract the attention of the reader.—*Manchester Examiner*.

“The Golden Quest, and other poems,” by Mrs. Mosscockle, is a little volume of verse, which has secured a good word from Mr. Gladstone: in our judgment it is entirely deserving of his commendation both for loftiness of tone and strength of poetic vision.
—*The Christian*.

“The Golden Quest” takes up quite half the volume, which consists of 72 pages. The little book contains eighteen pieces, all of which show a highly cultivated taste, great power of poetic expression, and genuine sympathy with fallen humanity.—*Newcastle Chronicle*.

“The Golden Quest” is the title of a neat volume of poems by Mrs. Mosscockle. The poems are marked by strong religious feeling, and all are chaste and elegant in construction.—*Halifax Evening Courier*.

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